

# research and technology

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\*\* The Council of Ministers of the European Community is continuing to study the EURATOM PRELIMINARY DRAFT RESEARCH BUDGET for 1969, which was transmitted by the Commission on 8 January 1969 (see N° 3, "Research and Technology").

During its session of 23 January the European Parliament expressed its concern at the delay in the adoption of this budget. In the resolution that was passed, moreover, the Parliament stressed "the manifestly inadequate share of the Community's total budget appropriations that is allocated to a constructive research policy" and went on to urge that "the Community should, as it has done to a very large extent in other sectors, take THE NECESSARY FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN THE FIELD OF RESEARCH, ON WHICH FREE EUROPE'S FUTURE IN THE WORLD DEPENDS". The European Parliament also urged that there should be no staff dismissals before multi-annual research programmes for Euratom had been drawn up.

It is expected that the Council will define its attitude during the session due to be held on 19 February 1969.

\*\* The Council of Ministers of the European Communities has just begun the study of the report submitted to it by the Commission with the aim of defining INITIAL GUIDELINES FOR A COMMUNITY ENERGY POLICY. An abstract of the report is annexed.

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\*\* In a long written question addressed to the Council of Ministers and the Commission of the European Communities, Mr. Dröscher, German member of the European Parliament, states the problems of SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL COOPERATION as follows:

1. Do the Council and the Commission agree that the crisis of the Euratom Community shows clearly that in the field of research and technology the moment has come - as in 1958 in the economic field - to pass from a sector-by-sector approach to an overall approach at European level?
2. Do the Council and the Commission agree that it is necessary for a European institution to possess a general authority for cooperation in the fields of technology and research?
3. Do the Council and the Commission agree that cooperation in the fields of technology and research cannot be achieved in a systematic manner without extending it to cover the university system, all sectors of education and professional training, and cultural policy in general?
4. Do the Council and the Commission agree that this general authority in the matter of research and cultural policy can only be invested in the joint institutions of the EEC, the ECSC and Euratom?
5. Do the Council and the Commission agree that progress in this field cannot be tied to the question of the widening of the Community, especially since cooperation with the States which have applied to join the European Communities is already in existence within the Council of Europe, and in particular within the Council for Cultural Cooperation, and also since the participation of non-member countries in certain big projects is possible at any time?
6. Do the Council and the Commission agree that the authority of the institutions of the European Communities in the field of research and culture must therefore be reorganized and rendered more general when the treaties are merged?
7. Do the Council and the Commission agree that, in the event of the merger of the treaties being too long delayed, it would be advisable to go ahead and conclude new agreements in the fields of research and culture, in order to avoid any stagnation and deterioration of Europe's competitive position with regard to other big industrial and scientific nations?

- \*\* The Commission of the European Communities has just announced the provisional acceptance of the ESSOR REACTOR and its auxiliaries. This reactor, which is installed at the Ispra establishment of the Joint Research Centre, is a 50 MWth test reactor designed for the study of the behaviour of heavy-water moderated reactor elements under actual operating conditions. It was built under the auspices of an industrial grouping consisting of GAAA (France), Interatom (Germany) and Montecatini-Edison (Italy).
  
- \*\* The European Scientific Data Processing Centre (CETIS) at the Ispra establishment of the Joint Research Centre has just completed final development work on a data-processing programme which enables a digital computer to be used for the MACHINE TRANSLATION OF SCIENTIFIC TEXTS FROM RUSSIAN INTO ENGLISH. This programme has already been 80%-tested.  
 In addition CETIS has developed an experimental system whereby a DIGITAL COMPUTER IS USED FOR AUTOMATICALLY ASSIGNING KEYWORDS for denoting the subject matter of scientific texts, which can thus be easily stored in magnetic memories and automatically retrieved.
  
- \*\* The research into PLUTONIUM RECYCLING IN THERMAL REACTORS, on which the Community had been engaged since July 1960 in association with Centre Belge de l'Energie Nucléaire and the Belgian firm of Belgonucléaire, has just been completed and a final report is now being drawn up. The activities represented a total expenditure of nearly 10 million dollars, in which the Commission participated to the extent of almost 5.8 million.
  
- \*\* The Netherlands Reactor Centre RCN has just submitted to the Commission of the European Communities the final report on the research carried out in association with Euratom on the design of a MARINE PROPULSION REACTOR (NERO).
  
- \*\* The Commission of the European Communities has just received from the German firm of Interatom the report concluding the research activities conducted under the contract that had been awarded to it for a study on THE OPTIMUM UTILIZATION OF PLUTONIUM IN THE ENERGY ECONOMY.

\*\* The SCIENTIFIC OR TECHNICAL REPORTS published recently by the Commission of the European Communities (Directorate-General for the Dissemination of Information) include the following:

- EUR 3485e/f: "Examination of the International Atomic Energy Agency's regulations for the safe transport of radioactive materials";
- EUR 4189i: "1967 annual report on the operation of the Garigliano nuclear power plant";
- EUR 4090i: "Technical and economic study on the desalination of sea water and brackish water".

PRELIMINARY AIMS OF A COMMON ENERGY POLICY

Summary of the report submitted by the Commission to the Council of Ministers of the Community

The report on energy policy sent by the Commission to the Council is in the form of a framework for political action fixing the general aims and the instruments by which a Community policy can be fashioned.

This policy has to be based first and foremost on the interests of consumers because of the importance of energy to the competitive capacity of the industries which use it and of its influence on the cost of living. Not only, therefore, must there be dependability of energy supply; energy prices must be relatively stable and as low as possible.

Competition must continue to be the basic guiding factor, and intervention, where it is essential, must be such that market forces are not prevented from operating but are enabled to play their part effectively. Consequently, the Commission's proposals give priority to the supervisory function, with intervention only to be regarded as a last resort.

The Commission's proposals fall into three categories: the determination of an overall framework for the action to be taken; measures for the establishment of a common market; and measures for developing a policy of cheap and reliable supply.

The FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION comprises the drawing-up of medium-term forecasts and policy aims and the examination each year of the economic situation. Its purpose is to bring about, in the light of the market features, the necessary cohesion of energy policy measures. It must also ensure that the energy sector develops in line with the aims of medium-term economic policy.

The Commission's proposals for the ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMON MARKET are directed to ensuring compliance with the Treaty provisions concerning the free movement of goods, freedom of establishment, and application of the rules governing competition and indirect taxation.

Free movement of goods calls for the removal of the direct and indirect obstacles to trade within the Community. Freedom of establishment presupposes the effective abolition of discrimination between nationals of Member States engaging in activities in the energy sector. With regard to competition, there are four main problems: non-discriminatory access to sources of supply, surveillance of concentrations, establishment of a procedure to provide a posteriori information on prices actually obtaining on the market, and harmonization of the various countries'

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provisions concerning prices. On indirect taxation, the Commission proposes harmonized application of the tax on value added, harmonization coupled with gradual reduction of the specific duties on energy products where these duties are designed to protect other forms of energy, and harmonization of duties on hydrocarbon fuels.

In order to bring a POLICY OF CHEAP AND RELIABLE SUPPLY into being, the Commission recommends action on commercial policy, on guidance of investments and on the structure of industry, as well as steps to facilitate the financing of investments.

In particular, the Commission proposes a coordinated import policy for coal; in the case of hydrocarbon and nuclear fuels, it suggests the establishment at Community level of a supply programme combining the various industrial programmes.

As regards investments, the Community proposes a number of levels for possible intervention, the first being an annual confrontation of investment policies and projects.

The steps that could be taken to improve the structure of the power industry vary from sector to sector. In the case of coal, the quantity mined would be brought into line with marketing opportunities and production would be concentrated on the most productive mines; also envisaged are, on the one hand, the introduction of Community aid arrangements permitting continued mining of the quantities necessary for supplying the Community and, on the other hand, improved coordination of Community aid systems. As regards hydrocarbons, the first task should be to eliminate, principally by means of fiscal provisions, the disparities in conditions of competition between Community enterprises and externally controlled enterprises; the second task should be to take steps to facilitate the purchase by enterprises of their own crude oil resources. Where nuclear fuel is concerned, the Commission stresses the importance of installing an isotope separation plant for Community needs, and it proposes amending the provisions of the Euratom Treaty chapter on nuclear fuel supply policy in such a way as to make it possible for nuclear fuels to be supplied according to the rules of the market.

As regards the financing of investment, consideration might be given to supplementing the facilities currently available under the Treaties by the provision of guarantees or Community financing opportunities for the fulfilment of certain concrete investment projects.